



One Hundred First Legislature - First Session - 2009
Introducer's Statement of Intent
LB 591

Chairperson: Chris Langemeier
Committee: Natural Resources
Date of Hearing: February 19, 2009

The following constitutes the reasons for this bill and the purposes which are sought to be accomplished thereby:

LB 591 expands the criteria the Power Review Board may consider in reviewing applications for new renewable energy generation facilities if the proposed facility cannot meet the current statutory criteria. The new criteria apply to all proposed projects including applications from our public utilities and Community-Based Energy Development (C-BED) projects.

Under LB 591 the proposed renewable energy facility would have to serve the public need and necessity and meet one or more of the following new criteria:

- (a) reduction of pollution;
- (b) water conservation;
- (c) displacement of nonrenewable fuel sources; or
- (d) provide economic advantage to the rural economy.

The bill continues to consider the impact on rates by requiring that the substantial benefits the proposed facility provides will not create the need for a significant increase in the applicant's wholesale or retail electric rates.

Wind energy development -- particularly C-BED projects -- provide significant economic boosts to our struggling rural areas. Passage of LB 591 will encourage development of wind energy in Nebraska. At the same time our state's mandate to maintain low rates remains in place while providing greater latitude and flexibility to the Board in their review and approval of these applications.

Principal Introducer: _____
Senator M.L. Dierks